

**Council on the Blind  
Smyrna Rest Stop  
5500 DuPont Parkway  
Smyrna, DE 19977  
Meeting Minutes, January 4, 2019**

**Call to Order.** After a delay, a quorum was recognized. Chair Lloyd Schmitz, called the meeting to order at 10:13 a.m.

**Roll Call.**

Council Members: Lloyd Schmitz, Chair, Deidre Morris, Jillian Queen, Kat Bottner.

Absent: Ken Rolph, Pat Carzo, Patti Addison.

Division for the Visually Impaired (DVI) Staff: Elisha Jenkins, Director, Jill Morrison, Michele Hamilton.

Public: Wayne Marsh, Blind Vendors Committee Chair, Mary Marsh, Rob Keller.

**Welcome.** Lloyd Schmitz welcomed everyone to the meeting and wished everyone a Happy New Year.

**Minutes.** Minutes of the December 2018 were not available at the time of the meeting and were tabled.

**Director's Report - Elisha Jenkins**

There has been limited activity since our last meeting due to the holidays.

BEP. Dec. 5 met with Public Health to discuss the recent taste test to determine what people wanted to eat and were willing to pay within the healthy vending guidelines. Surveys and gift cards were issued for participants.

The 40% volume of healthy vending options to be placed in assigned BEP Operator machines during the first quarter of 2019; a new voice-response device which would announce healthy vending options within the state locations; and the upcoming revised Contract with Canteen,

who supplies product for the vending machines throughout the state. Based upon survey results from the taste-testing locations, the majority of those surveyed indicated they enjoyed the healthy vending alternative options, and would like to see more choices offered in the machines. The sales have increased 14%, but not necessarily because of the healthy choices.

A lot of interest in micromarketing in DTCC. Will there be a pre-bid meeting? RFQ has the flex to choose to participate---vending to be the opportunity to meet the requirements of the location. The next step is in the vendor's hands to choose if they want to participate. The RFQ was what the vendor requested. They discussed the vending prices and selections? No, just qualifications and commissions. They still submit a bid. Also, they may bid again in August. Posted annually? Not sure, being the first one. That is one option, there are others. Operators assign locations, and the locations can select their own operator, so it's still in preliminary stages. Lloyd said this is good. It is making the operator's more independent.

Dec 18 operations at DTCC stopped. The Smyrna Gift Shoppe operations stopped Dec 31. Final loss? Not yet. Food disposed of? Yes. How? Donated to another state agency, similar to DPC. An Announcement was made to look for more operators and promotions.

Lloyd said there was a vending location available and it was satellite. Elisha said it was announced it was no longer available at a public meeting. The existing operator met a certain threshold for income and the other requirements. So the vendor will be at that location and the location is no longer available. The location was annexed.

There was an altercation concerning Lloyd questioned whether these dealings were made public or behind closed doors. The question was taken by DVI as a derogatory comment of the agency's integrity.

**Independent Living Services.** On Dec 14, the Holiday Crafts Workshop was held at both Biggs building and Milford State Service

Center Annex. There was one participant. Robocall was only two days before the event, but the event was posted on the website well in advance.

Newsfeed. There are 168 followers. Newline Apple App was non-functional for the last couple of months. The report of users might be skewed. Kat Bottner said that the app is working on Alexa. Newline is a lot more user friendly and valuable. That's why Elisha and Kat are collaborating on promotion of Newline.

Workshops are planned for assistive tech like screenreaders, for instance. Goal for 2019: One a month ILA, One every other month for tech. The team will provide a draft; probably every other month until we get a consensus of what the public need and want.

Lloyd suggested to reach out to Patty at Blindsight.  
Kat has a draft for the State convention.

**Vocational Rehabilitation.** On December 5, the Division sponsored an Open House to mark the beginning of their partnership with other state entities for the Governor's initiative of bringing more services to the city of Wilmington at the Porter State Service Center. Staff coordinated with the Division of Social Services and the Division of State Services Centers to ensure the provision of combined services by the close of year. A Division Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor and Vocational Rehabilitation Business Consultant will be on-site at the Porter State Service Center every Wednesday going forward to provide employment information, community resources, and other support systems which are needed to blind and visually impaired consumers. The Open House provided the Wilmington community and the State Service Center staff an opportunity to learn about the services offered through the Division for the Visually Impaired, and Division staff are looking forward to these partnerships and collectively expanding services at the Porter State Service Center going forward.

VR Open House State Service Center - every Wednesday. DVI will have a presentation. Just started in December. Job training is planned. Promoted with West End? Not sure. She will check. It's a good point.

Lloyd suggested to make your legislatures aware of it. Promoting that as a satellite operation will bring it attention since it is in a remote location. Mini-one stop. Coordinating with DVR? Yes, they have a similar program.

### **Education.**

New Castle County Student of the Month. He is doing great with his cane training. In the paper? No, he requested privacy.

How many trainer/educations for tech? One. Position posted and applicants? Yes. Filled in the next 60 days? Yes.

Would it be advantageous to have a different classification for some of the open positions? There are good and bad things about that since some require degrees and other requirements. For instance, an ILA educator 3 has the certification.

Tech VI Working Group is creating a manual that will be in the format of a website.

**New Business.** Other Business: Jill Morrison said VR sent something to Lloyd about one placement that went to BISM. 2017-2018 referred to any other facilities? How many VR placements went to other agencies?

### **Public Comments.**

Rob Keller said that the General Assembly will start this Tuesday. Lloyd said the Joint Sunset Committee has not assigned their members yet.

### **Adjournment.**

Motion to Adjourn was made by Jillian Queen, seconded by Deidre Morris. Chair Lloyd Schmitz adjourned the meeting at 10:58 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted by,  
Jillian Queen  
Council Member